

have demonstrated its possibilities and given object lessons of what it should be both in England and at home. It is an achievement of which they have every reason to be proud. No branch of work shows in a prettier way the dependence of medicine for good results on nursing, or the necessity of rounding out the plans of men by the personal solicitude of women. The neglected children formerly excluded from school by the medical inspectors played on the street without treatment and lost their schooling as well. Now, with the practical details given over to the nurse, the medical inspectors are thoroughly examining the eyes and the whole physical condition of the school children, and the whole immense field of physical development, nutrition, and life conditions of the child, is being opened up to intelligent scrutiny. In every city where there are no school nurses organizations of nurses should lead the agitation for their appointment.

Extracts from Miss Rogers' annual report showing work done in New York City during the past year are found on another page.

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## THE FUTURE OF OUR ASSOCIATIONS

How are our *alumnæ* associations to be improved? After considering the many lines of work and interests that are open to our local associations comes the question: Are they alive to their many possibilities, or are they not? Now, to answer this truly, let us all be perfectly honest and candid with ourselves. No polite generalizing, no amiable rose-coloring of statement. We have a few excellent associations, that do excellent work, where there is an *esprit de corps* and where traditions are handed down that keep the younger ones inspired. But is it not a fact that nine-tenths of our meetings are deadly dull; a waste of time; a bore and an affliction of spirit? That all of the work is done by two or three overburdened people? That the others do not even feel an interest in what the few are doing, far less support and encourage them? We know of associations where nothing but the nice cake and coffee draws a few members together; others, where the younger members only appear when they have some extra-fine clothes; others, where the whole time is spent in wearisome hair splitting of parliamentary procedures,—nothing live, nothing vital, nothing inspiring. Then, we hear complaints that the members will not come to meetings, that the new graduates will not join, and that the old ones are stupid. Enough of criticism. We all know the state of the case. What is to be done?

In the first place, it is our opinion that a greatly more determined and systematic attempt should be made to bring into the associations the oncoming classes. It should be a matter of course that the graduating class would enter the Alumnae Association as a body. But there are very few schools where this occurs. On the contrary, it is quite the rule that out of every graduating class, say of twenty, three, or four join the Alumnae. Why is this? It is because the Alumnae have shown no interest in securing membership? Heretofore this has been left to the superintendents,—busy women, whose daily duties are steadily becoming more complex and numerous.

The Superintendent's duty in this matter is easily defined. She should see to it that during the entire period of training in the hospital the pupils receive proper instruction in regard to their obligations to the profession which they are preparing to enter. This should be done by informal talks from time to time in class, with perhaps once a year a lecture to the whole school given either by the superintendent herself or by some one selected by her.

Then a short time before the senior class graduates members of the alumnae association should be given an opportunity to spend an evening with the class, acquainting the members with the object of the association, what it stands for, what it is trying to do, and how it can be helpful to the individual nurse.

Having given the alumnae association this opportunity, the superintendent's obligation to the association in regard to the matter of securing new members is at an end.

We would suggest, however, that if the superintendent fails to invite the alumnae for such a conference with the graduating class, that the alumnae take the initiative and request that this privilege may be granted to a committee of its members.

After the pupils have left the hospital it then becomes the business of the alumnae and not the business of the superintendent to bring the new graduates into the association.

We will predict that if this yearly talk was given by members of the association outside of the hospitals, there would be results; not all at once, but results.

Having done this, and invited the class to join as a whole, the Association might easily make some little informal social affair to welcome them and make them feel that there is a social center and bond. As to meetings, routine business should be transacted as quickly as possible and put out of the way. A frightful amount of time is wasted over unimportant details, which could be dispatched with a word and in

a moment; also in waiting for *tardy members* to make a quorum. More time should be given to informal social gatherings, where members could move about and meet each other, instead of sitting around the wall like a row of images. Most important of all, some work of real importance, and genuine usefulness should be taken up yearly, and associations might well be divided into departments, like the women's clubs, each department having its special work. Every member of the association should be in one of these departments; thus all would feel a share in the interest and responsibility, which now are loaded on two or three chairmen of committees, or on the president.

Instead of making routine monthly reports to the *JOURNAL*, all sounding exactly alike, and consisting principally of names, associations could report when something was done; when an achievement had been completed; when some worthy success had encouraged them.

We have given in these pages what we consider to be the ideal lines of development with the ideal division of work and interests for the future life and up-building of our organizations.

The Alumnae Association has been a powerful factor in the development of national unity; can it be extended to meet the needs of the growing future; is it possible to overcome the fostering of school lines and the narrowing of interests which at the present time seem to be a threatened danger?

Have its days of usefulness passed and is this the cause of the prevailing inertia, to the existence of which we cannot blind ourselves?

If this is true, then what is to be our next line of development?

With fresh vigor we must get to work. Stagnation will be our ruin.

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### OUR PRIVATE NURSING EDITOR

WE announced in our last issue that at the January meeting of the Journal Directors, it was decided to appoint a salaried Private Nursing Editor who would devote her entire time to subjects dealing exclusively with the work and interests of private nurses.

Miss Catharine De Witt, who has been appointed to this position, was born in the State of New York, received a college education in Massachusetts, graduated as a nurse from the Illinois Training-School in Chicago, and has practiced her profession in nearly every state in the Union.

Immediately after receiving her nurse diploma in 1891 she was